QUICK GUIDE: Managing Distress
What to notice; how to respond

When someone appears or behaves in a way that makes you concerned about their psychological or emotional well-being, consult this guide to action.

**Signs of Distress**

You might notice one serious sign or a cluster of less worrisome signs from different categories.

**EMOTIONAL** Irritability, anger; sadness, crying, anxiety; showing extreme reactions; expressions of disinterest, apathy, or hopelessness; suicidal comments

**COGNITIVE** Decline in work or academic performance; poor concentration or decision-making; out of touch with reality, odd speech.

**PHYSICAL** Frequent health issues; problems with sleep or eating; rapid heartbeat/jittery; disheveled appearance; social withdrawal; increased drinking or drug use

**Levels of Distress**

**CONCERN** Visible distress, personal loss or significant life event, academic difficulties, sleep or eating problems, emotional outbursts, social withdrawal

**URGENT** Expressions of hopelessness; talk of suicide; being out-of-touch with reality.

**EMERGENCY** Immediate threat of harm to self/others.

**Response Options**

Keep the appropriate individual or office informed.

**CONCERN** Talk to person directly and/or consult with a supervisor or administrator.

**URGENT** Get immediate assistance 24/7:
- For a student, call Gannett/CAPS (255-5155)
- For a staff or faculty member, call FSAP (1-800-327-2255) and press 1

**EMERGENCY** Dial 911 or call CU Police @ 255-1111

More information: www.gannett.cornell.edu/assist General 11/4/09